

Snowfall

NANCY RODECKER

Dusk was enveloping the city when the first tiny flakes began to fall. I remember looking through my bedroom window and noticing that the naked redbud outside was clothed in a powdery robe of snow that lent it a fragile and ghostly air. Since first snowfalls had always interested me, I curled up in an easy chair and viewed the frosty process from the warmth of my room. Outside, the atmosphere was brittle and clear. The bitter wind of the day had retired for the night, and the snow sifted through the trees in an unbroken pattern, as if it had been poured from a giant flour sifter in the sky. Serenity was

everywhere. No sounds penetrated the still air. The lights in the houses seemed to wink at me and tell me that they were warm and comfortable, too, far away from the cold black and white night. Gradually the rough stones in the driveways became blanketed in soft white, and baby drifts were born in the corners of the neighbors' house, a house whose lines were becoming indistinct as the flurries increased in speed and intensity. Soon the wind, having become tired of resting, entered in a flurry of snow and leaves and knocked on my window. Then it turned and brushed past the redbud, leaving it bare and shivering again.

Solliloquy

DORIS DALEY

The northern day was drawing to a close, and as I watched the sun slide down behind multi-colored clouds, its satellite rays trailing after, it seemed that with it went something of the human quality of this earth, leaving me alone in the presence of the unknown.

Standing topside in the prow, I could look down and watch the slender ship cut the never-ending swells. On either side, the smooth hull sent the backwash sliding along its sides, crested with foam at first, and gradually spiralling out into shining ripples amidships, all the while roaring like a hungry beast. But the water's rest was not for long, the pounding propeller catching and churning the mass up again, and then, their savagery gratified, leaving it to lose itself in the immensity of the ocean.

As the gray of the sky deepened, a wind came up, blowing away the clouds

and leaving the sky a smooth, velvety black, but still, somehow, not a warm black. Now it was dark enough to see the reflection of the port lantern upon the rolling eddies below — a huge brass lantern, glistening from many polishings, with a ruby-red glass — a fat and comfortable looking lantern, the only bulwark of civilization out on the cold, bleak water. For a time its presence was rather comforting, but to each constellation that burned through the last of the dying day the lantern seemed to lose a little of its brilliance until both lamp and ship disappeared, leaving me suspended between two infinities.

Star after star added its cold, white spark to the heavens, until it seemed impossible for another to find room, but still the earth was dark and chill. A driving wind was pushing the ship onward — onward over the brink of the world.